



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Office for Domestic Preparedness

Top Officials (TOPOFF): History and Design

November 17, 2003



Introduction

- A national, biennial Domestic Counterterrorism Exercise Series.
- Two year planning endeavor, involving all levels of government and the private sector.
- The Top Official (TOPOFF) National Domestic Counterterrorism Exercise Series is a component of the Secretary of Homeland Security's National Exercise Program.



TOPOFF Legislation

- Public Law 106-553 provides funding for TOPOFF, and Senate Report 106-404 outlines the concept.
- Responsibility for the TOPOFF Domestic Counterterrorism National Exercise Series transferred from the Department of Justice to the Department of Homeland Security on 1 March 2003 with transfer of the Office for Domestic Preparedness.



TOPOFF 2000 – May 2000

- **Congress directed conduct of a no notice exercise:** “...with the participation of all key personnel who would participate in the consequence management of such an actual terrorist event.”
- **TOPOFF 2000 was a single, full-scale exercise conducted over 10 days in three venues:**
 - Denver, CO: Bioterrorism attack (Plague).
 - Portsmouth, NH: Chemical attack (Sulfur Mustard).
 - National Capital Region: NCR 2000, concurrent but separate exercise (Radiological Dispersal Device).
- **Lessons from TOPOFF 2000 and September 11th steered T2 exercise goals and objectives.**





T2 Goals

- Improve the nation's capacity to manage complex/extreme terrorism events.
- Create a broader operating framework of expert federal, state, and local (FSL) integrated crisis/consequence incident management capability.
- Validate FSL authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, and synchronized capabilities.
- Build a sustainable, systematic national exercise program to support national domestic preparedness objectives.

T2 focused on a limited number of critical federal, state, local and international crisis and consequence management objectives.

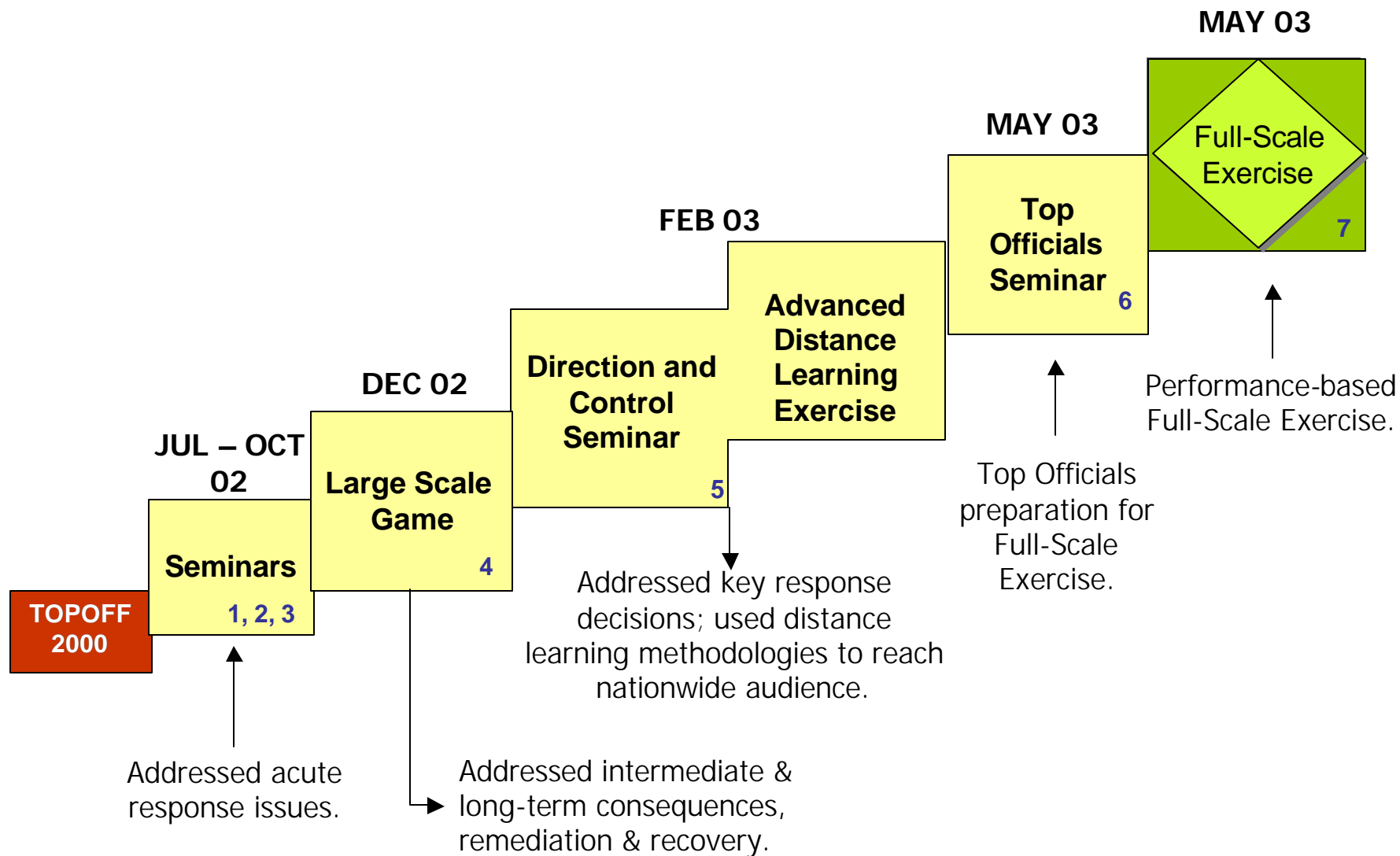


TOPOFF Series Design

- **A cycle of exercise activity that increases in complexity.**
 - Focused on resolving acute issues before the full-scale exercise (FSE), and evaluating performance during and after the series.
- **The series is designed to be tolerant of potential contingencies.**
 - “Banks” learning after each exercise activity.
- **All participants have access to the full exercise scenario and all exercise documentation.**
 - Only the Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) is closely held.



T2 Cycle of Activity





Summary

- **TOPOFF is**
 - A performance-based, biennial domestic counterterrorism exercise series emphasizing collaborative & continuous learning.
 - Flexible, dynamic, & designed to benefit the widest audience.
 - Fosters the Federal, State, local, and international cooperation necessary to counter terrorism.
 - Provides a premier opportunity to “practice to proficiency.”

TOPOFF 2000 balanced the need to provide key exercise feedback with the need to protect results – T2 results have been similarly managed.



T2 Contact Information

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Questions